

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FSE-00 AID-05 IGA-01 L-02 ABF-01 TRSE-00

OMB-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 /025 W

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P R 211300Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3280

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

UNCLAS NOUAKCHOTT 0133

PARIS FOR RFC

AID/W FOR AFR/CWR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN AFIN MR

SUBJECT: MAURITANIA PROHIBITS FOREIGN OPERATIONS OF BANK HOLDING
EMBASSY/AID ACCOUNTS

REF: (A) NOUAKCHOTT 0093 (B) NOUAKCHOTT 0094

1. EFFECTIVE JANUARY 21, EMBASSY IS ABLE TO CASH OUGUIYA CHECKS AT BANQUE INTERNATIONALE POUR LA MAURITANIE (BIMA), THUS RESOLVING, FOR MOMENT ANYWAY, IMMEDIATE PROBLEM OF LACK OF ACCESS TO LOCAL CURRENCY. PRESUMABLY, HOWEVER, BIMA WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACCEPT FOREIGN CURRENCY REPLENISHMENT CHECKS FOR EMBASSY ACCOUNT FROM RFC PARIS DUE TO DECREE WHICH PROHIBITS BIMA FROM CONDUCTING FOREIGN BANKING OPERATIONS. THEREFORE, ONCE EMBASSY OUGUIYA ACCOUNT IS DRAWN DOWN, WE WILL BE OUT OF OPERATING CASH. WE BELIEVE THIS PROBLEM CAN BE RECTIFIED BY ESTABLISHING NEW ACCOUNT AT ANOTHER BANK AS PROPOSED REF (B). IN MEANTIME, WE PROPOSE TO DRAWDOWN BIMA ACCOUNT UNTIL IT IS USED UP.

2. MISSION PREVIOUSLY HAD ARRANGEMENT WITH BIMA TO CASH PERSONAL DOLLAR CHECKS IN ORDER TO OBTAIN OUGUIYA FOR LOCAL USE.

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AS SUCH TRANSACTIONS ARE PROSCRIBED UNDER TERMS OF

DECREE MENTIONED REF. (A), WE INTEND TO MAKE SIMILAR
ARRANGEMENT AT ANOTHER BANK.

3. CHARGE MENTIONED PROBLEM OF EMBASSY ACCOUNT AT BIMA WITH CENTRAL
BANK OFFICIAL JANUARY 17, ASKING AT SAME TIME IF WE MUST OBTAIN
CENTRAL BANK PERMISSION TO MOVE ACCOUNT TO ANOTHER BANK. OFFICIAL
SAID EMBASSY MAY TRANSFER ACCOUNT AND CENTRAL BANK PERMISSION IS
NOT NEEDED. PENDING RESPONSE FROM RFC, WE HAVE NOT YET RAISED
QUESTION WITH BIMA. AS NOTED PARA. 1 ABOVE, HOWEVER, WE
BELIEVE DRAWDOWN BIMA ACCOUNT EASIEST WAY TO RESOLVE PROBLEM.

4. AID OFFICER DISCUSSED TRANSFER OF AID ACCOUNT WITH MINISTER OF
HEALTH JANUARY 20. MINISTER GAVE GO AHEAD TO MOVE ACCOUNT
IF NECESSARY AND HE AGREED TO SIGN LETTER TO BIMA TO THIS
EFFECT. AS AID/GIRM NOW ABLE TO DRAW ON OUGUIYA ACCOUNT AT BIMA,
URGENCY FOR MOVING ACCOUNT HAS DECREASED. NEVERTHELESS, AID/GIRM
ACCOUNT WILL EXPERIENCE SAME PROBLEM WITH NON-OGUIYA REPLENISH-
MENT CHECKS, THUS REQUIRING ULTIMATE TRANSFER OF ACCOUNT. SHINN

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